

Bard

Bard College
Bard Digital Commons

Robert Kelly Manuscripts

Robert Kelly Archive

10-2009

octG2009

Robert Kelly
Bard College

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "octG2009" (2009). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 589.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/589

This Manuscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Robert Kelly Archive at Bard Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Robert Kelly Manuscripts by an authorized administrator of Bard Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@bard.edu.

Bard

= = = = =

Autumn sedum rescue
Chopin dry flowers under
each a sift of reddish
dust Adam amalgam
never far the tone and the ear
pergola or gazebo from
which the sea seen autumn
is seed what do the waves
bear girlbait red rocks over
and she listened annoyed
at all the tunes too masculine
such moony dreams a woman
has a hard fact in her head
isn't it? autumn? seed?
chill flowers to illuminate
the flatness of a table eat
with me every meal a seder
no night too long a tongue
legitimate yet licks
all the wrong words before
falls silent as molecules
of quicksilver infesting
molecules of gold stars also
best seen from the margins
of our seeing corners

of the eye where loutish
angels also wait to take
your time and turn it
inside out curlicues
in granites Egypt the hard
or earth mother of the gods.

22 October 2009

Allow a merchant

adventure
just once in your plan and
farewell forest.
The deer.
those famous eyes,
the fire. the hot wind/
The go.

Call it like all money
a game
a suicide,
a thing with numbers
or white stones
call it the shallow Walkill yesterday
the bones of gravel shown midstream
down past Tillson
and the swamp appeared to have
more water than the river—

is that what you mean,
money kills?
And only the dark stone
in the middle of the brain
that dream-thing
gives life?

A letter from the government
arriving at your house
by mistake
but like a hundred horsemen
shooting at your poor window,
are we an army
that we can go so wrong?

All a man is
a woodpecker picking
on someone else's house,
I was born
with a deep animal
who runs from things
an animal that leaps on your shadow,

and a hatred of selling things,
no merchant me, my karma
will not let me, no selling,
my money has no color.

And for a beast comme ça
no commerce at all
but intercourse with angels
each one carrying
a book or two to the bed
or where we meet, Yosemite or

on a gloomy day like this

in the leafy graveyard,

Roman arena, or moonless seacoast,

or broken chimney where the old road starts

that runs south into alchemy.

As I walk along this later

catercorner to my goal

people give me things,

it is not easy

to be a pilgrim

and not leave home

but that's my task,

human brother of so many sisters,

think of a soft clay table just rolled out

now newly-spotted with blue ink still wet

and nothing gouged in

but some of us insist on reading

in a clear voice, joyous

as if the words were really there

then the wind throws down more leaves

and I have told everything but what I know.

23 October 2009

= = = = =

You philanderer you fraud
how many books did you finger
but never took to bed?

When you read a book deep enough
that you dream it onward when you sleep
that's what I call reading—

all the rest is pieces of paper flirting with pieces of paper.

23 October 2009

= = = = =

So many but enough—
on a May morning in 1819
how many young men
in any language
sat down to write?

They all did
and all the sentences
they wrote in ink or
graphite or with a brush
spoke one immense truth

of which only some
fragments are left
that we call Keats.

23 October 2009

= = = = =

We call them prayer flags
they call them Wind Horse
the wind rides them surely
color by color until we see.

23.X.09

= = = = =

As everybody is
a fall flower easy
tugged off its twig and
given to me you
are given to me
I delight in this
commission being
myself broken to
fit inside your hand.

23 October 2009

Kingston

= = = = =

Any name

you put a cartouche

around becomes

a king's name

a god in time

a name inserted

into the actual stone.

23.X.09, Kingston

TO KNOW THE PLACE AGAIN

the rain instructs
so many passengers
inside the body of that giant man
the horsemen entered
and all those miles
were just one bone,
where was this in the earth
revealed, a preacher
warning children against the sea,
the waves love you too much,
the seals want you for their own—

and there they were months later
still traveling inside the bone

how weird the body is!
who would dare to be a man
on this kind of earth?

2.

Satie as far as flowers went
kept old letters on his bed,
dried unopened buds of speech
he never read or heard, dried

white and pale blue flowers
left after years of it where
did he sleep? Some have no
need of living flowers—
myself I mourn the three
head of dark mauve autumn
sedum almost brown now
tossed out in cleaning house,
what could be more lost
than a lost long dead flower
like a phone ringing in the rain?

3.

But what came next?

They came

at length to the pelvis
of that giant form and learned
it was a woman's body they
had journeyed in so long—
some fainted, some howled
in shame,

the bones! the bones!

how could a woman have bones,
how could a woman lead so straight a life
and here we are and where are we?

4.

The bird look of the near sky
consoled them.

Flags

over small huts, blue smoke,
faces glimpsed at low windows.

Could it be home at last?

Did it hurt enough to be really here?

24 October 2009

= = = = =

A man is walking up the field.
It's what I think when I think of you,
a tall man walking in tall grass,
no dog, no birds and not much wind,
a tall thin man walking up a stretch
of what we used to call high
meadow, no mountain, just a big
field higher than the woods around,
slow scaling up towards the sky.
no reason he shouldn't get there,
he walks with clarity and fortitude,
and he's talking to himself as he goes
or singing, more like singing,
and the more he sings the more he knows.

24 October 2009

for Terence Boylan, his birthday

RUIN TERRAIN

ruin to reign
spokes of the same grim wheel

buy nothing and you won't be sad
won't be guilty—

I wanted
to talk about beauty,
not possessing it. But want is always
always want and never having,
but words
slip off the cool mosaic walls.
Ravenna. It's always
snowing somewhere else,
thunder mountain,
the empty barrel rolls away by night
the so-called lark
is mum at morning.
Who will ever
come answer me
a lifelong sailor
on an absent sea?

Basic urges of aesthetic puberty
scratch many a wall.

The clay
was hardly dry before the censor broke it—
the wall fell down
and only the graffiti lasted—
these strange markings make the city work.

25 October 2009

= = = = =

Little by little get it to more.
There are miracles
and the other thing,
the Dependable Consequence—
you see it coming over the hill
every morning
and a girl who likes graveyards
studies the names of all those
who let her be silent at last.

25 October 2009

= = = = =

Wanting more for less a common
leaf on everybody's tree but sap's
recurrent anadrome amaze-me after
no matter there was none, the sun
overwhelms us from within! that
is the point the *outward rhyme*
of vision with the given, we hear
what's heart, beneath the heart's
pale satellite aloft each dawn.
For one is one. The center
is not for nothing called the core.

26 October 2009

SHAPE

So often it's the shape

that tells,

surprises

or gives a chance to harp

dulcimer and folk bassoon

all too soft for me

for me a clangor

banjo or tuba bucinum

call to inner jihad always,

this

war music 'gainst the gloom inside.

Wake me, jangle, from my thinking,

irritate me into peacefulness of mind.

26 October 2009

= = = = =

And it was just sitting there

waiting to be said.

The door is the angel of the house

full always of annunciations.

Read my light right. To open

lets the inside also out,

it can't ever open either without speaking.

26 October 2009

= = = = =

But why so little
when everything is in sight?
Out of reach,
the skin is only good
when it can touch—
otherwise sheer overwhelming.
Thunder of alien sounds
radio in an Indian café.

26 October 2009